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LETTER DATED 25 MARCH 1997 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF ARMENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to forward to you herewith enclosed the text of a statement issued today, 25 March 1997, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia.

I should be grateful if you would circulate the statement as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Movses ABELIAN
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex

Statement issued on 25 March 1997 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia

In response to the appeal by the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group and as a sign of Armenia's constructive position, Armenia has unilaterally decided to release all the Azeri prisoners in Armenia, as documented by the International Committee of the Red Cross. With this act Armenia once again reiterates its commitment to the full and unconditional release of all prisoners, in adherence to the "all-for-all" principle.

To organize the release and the transfer of the prisoners, the Ministry of the Interior and National Security has already contacted and begun to cooperate with the representatives of the Red Cross.

In making this decision, Armenia has been guided by the awareness of the need to demonstrate goodwill on the eve of the resumption of the negotiations, and by the commitment to a solution based on mutual compromise.

Armenia calls on Nagorno Karabagh and Azerbaijan to respond to the initiative of the Minsk Group Co-Chairmen and release all the prisoners of war that they hold.

Armenia is convinced that the expression of such resoluteness will create a favourable atmosphere for the negotiations soon to be held in Moscow.